

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7085

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 1318

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PGOV, TH

SUBJECT: DEMOCRAT PARTY POSITION ON U.S. PRESENCE

REF: BANGKOK 1146

1. DR. KAMON SOMWICHIAN, DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL FOR TECHNICAL AFFAIRS AND A MEMBER OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE DEMOCRAT PARTY TOLD EMBASSY OFFICERS ON JANUARY 20 THAT PUBLISHED STATEMENTS BY PARTY LEADER SENI PRAMOT CALLING FOR THE REMOVAL OF ALL U.S. MILITARY ADVISORS (SEE REFTEL) ARE PRIMARILY FOR PUBLIC CONSUMPTION AND DO NOT REFLECT REAL PARTY POLICY. HE POINTED OUT THAT IN THE 1975 ELECTIONS THE DEMOCRATS CALLED FOR AN 18 MONTH WITHDRAWAL, AND IT WAS KHUKRIT PRAMOT WHO LOWERED THIS TO 12 MONTHS. HE SAID THAT SENI AND OTHER PARTY LEADERS FAVOR A CONTINUED SMALL U.S. PRESENCE, BUT FEEL THAT THEY MUST PRE-EMPT OTHER PARTIES ON THIS ISSUE TO MAINTAIN THE PARTY'S CREDIBILITY AMONG LIBERALS AS WELL AS TO MOLLIFY THE LEFT-WING OF THE PARTY DURING THE CAMPAIGN. HE ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT SHOULD THE DEMOCRATS FORM A COALITION WITH A PARTY WHICH DOES ADVOCATE TOTAL U.S. WITHDRAWAL, THEY WOULD GIVE IN ON THE ISSUE.

2. COMMENT: KAMON HAS ATTENDED CORNELL, NYU, AND COLUMBIA. HE WAS A LECTURER AT U.S. ARMY SCHOOL OF LANGUAGES IN MONTERREY FOR TWO YEARS AND IS BY NO MEANS UNFRIENDLY TO U.S. HOWEVER, AS BETWEEN PUBLIC POSITION
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STATED BY SENI (REFTEL) AND PRIVATE POSITION EXPRESSED

TO EMBASSY BY KAMON, WE HAVE LITTLE DOUBT THAT PUBLIC
POSITION WILL BE THE DOMINANT THEME IN ELECTITN CAMPAIGN
OF DEMOCRAT PARTY.
MASTERS

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NNN

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